An impressionistic landscape painting with thick, visible brushstrokes. The colors are vibrant and varied, including shades of blue, green, yellow, orange, and pink, suggesting a natural scene like a valley or a field. The overall style is expressive and textured.

# Embracing Nature

an invitational  
exhibition featuring  
nature-themed works by  
regional artists and  
selections from the  
Sandzén Gallery's  
collection

September 9 through October 19, 2014

The Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery is honored to present "Embracing Nature" – an exhibition featuring nature-themed works by invited artists and from its collection. The initial idea for the show came about two years ago during one of the Gallery's quarterly show committee meetings. During the meeting the group decided, as it does occasionally, that they would like to see a special "themed" show in the exhibition areas. After a good bit of brainstorming, they settled on the official theme of "embracing nature." Nature, as subject matter, has been represented in art from the earliest of times, and seemed open to interpretation. As a matter of fact, our namesake, Birger Sandzén, wrote in the January, 1915, issue of *The Fine Arts Magazine*, "Fortunately, every artist has the opportunity of consulting a teacher that is always ready to give the very best advice to the sincere and unsophisticated disciple. The name of this great master is Nature . . . Individuality and nature in honest partnership will always create new and fascinating works of art, that will never grow old and never weaken."

After establishing the theme, each member was then asked to select three artists they would like to see in the show, and also elected to include their own work (one of the perks – or perils – of serving on the committee). At the next meeting, they brought nominations. After finalizing the list, all were contacted about participating. While a couple of artists declined, most enthusiastically accepted the challenge and the results can now be seen in the exhibition and this catalog.

Nature is also well represented in the Gallery's collection. Works by a variety of artists have been selected after considerable browsing, and prints make up the chief component. Of course our namesake, Birger Sandzén (1871-1954) developed a strong relationship with nature, and in trying to decide what works to select I hearkened back to a trip that he made to Estes Park nearly a hundred years ago, in August of 1917, to sketch with his friend and fellow artist, Henry Varnum Poor (1887-1970). The two stayed at Fall River Lodge on the outskirts of town and ventured into the newly established Rocky Mountain National Park (designated a national park in 1915) for long days of working with pencil and paper. Both artists made multiple studies throughout the region and developed works from their sketches. As a part of the exhibit, we are displaying the recently conserved oil painting *In the Mountains, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado* by Birger Sandzén and two etchings by Henry Varnum Poor, *Horseshoe Park, Colorado* and *Sunset, Horseshoe Park*. Poor also did large scale works from this time period that are in other collections.

Finally, it is my, and I think the committee's, hope that viewers will develop a greater appreciation for the importance of nature and how it is represented in art. From near literal visual transcriptions to abstracted pieces that reflect or use natural elements, this exhibition has a wide range of art and appropriately addresses nature's diversity. Also, it's clear the majority of artists working with natural subject matter find great joy in the process. It's summed up by one of my favorite nature writers, John Burroughs, when he penned: "I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order."

Ron Michael, Director  
Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery



*In the Mountains, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado* by Birger Sandzén, 1918,  
oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches.  
Greenough Collection,  
Sandzén Gallery.



*Horseshoe Park, Colorado* by Henry Varnum Poor, 1917,  
etching, 3 x 3 inches.  
Greenough Collection,  
Sandzén Gallery.



*Sunset, Horseshoe Park* by Henry Varnum Poor, 1917, etching,  
3 x 3 inches. Greenough Collection,  
Sandzén Gallery.



Lee Becker, Lindsborg, KS

*Big Black Bird (Chemical Sky)*, acrylic on canvas.

"I always loved to watch the swooping and sailing of vultures using air currents to find a meal on the ground. They are as necessary to the nature of things as flowers, insects, reptiles,

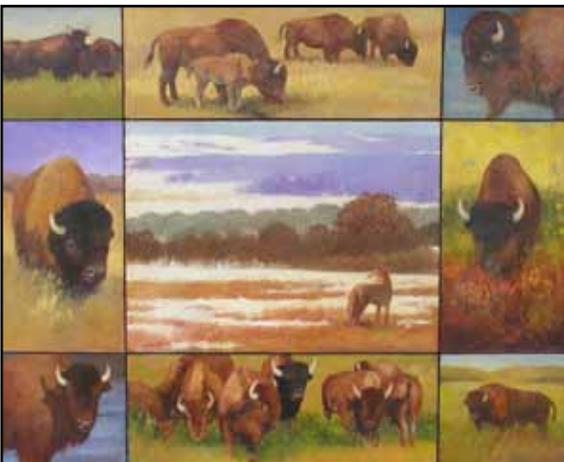
horses, cows, chickens and pigs. . . They remind us that nature involves birth, death, and the rebirth that will continue if mankind can restrain itself from pouring poisons into the air and on and into the earth. This sky has a slight poisonous cast...a result of what is there already."

Wayne A. Conyers, a native Kansan, has taught a wide variety of art courses at the elementary, secondary, and college/university levels. He has taught classes in drawing, painting, ceramics, junior and senior seminars for art majors, topical studies, and senior concentration for McPherson College. Conyer's work can be found in private, corporate, and museum collections throughout the Midwest. He received his MA from the University of Missouri in Kansas City, and his MFA from Fort Hays State University.

The work in "Embracing Nature" is an example of studies Conyers created during his recent sabbatical from McPherson College.

Wayne A. Conyers,  
McPherson, KS

2:37 p.m.,  
2014, graphite on  
paper,  
10 x 8 inches.



Jean Cook, Paola, KS

*Alone in a Buffalo Herd*,  
2014, oil on board,  
24 x 30 inches.

"A lifetime of experiences has greatly influenced my painting. I worked at Hallmark Cards as an engraving artist creating emboss and hot foil dies where I interpreted 2-D drawings into 3-D bas relief sculptures. My subjects of choice are the animal kingdom, whether wild or domestic. In my painting style I strive to keep loose and painterly, firmly believing that tight realism might as well be replaced with a photo.

In 1975 I took my first trip to Africa. Returning again in 1999, I saw many changes, mainly with the population growth among the Masai in Kenya and in the refuge camps on the edges of Nairobi. These changes have affected the wild life in Africa mainly with the loss of habitat. The same is true in the States as cities and housing developments have moved into the habitats of many of our wild life. While coyotes are surviving successfully in the Plains and on our city streets, the bison have been relegated to a few parks and private ranches around the US. One small herd is maintained at the Z Bar Ranch in the Flint Hills.

Kansas in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century was the home of millions of bison (falsely called buffalo by the Europeans). As the railroads and settlers moved into the plains a systematic slaughter was instigated and by the end of the Civil War the bison were almost exterminated in the plains. My great grandfather as a means of making a living was one of many shooting the bison in western Kansas. Thankfully the plight of the bison was recognized and they were brought back from the brink of extinction."



Steve Dudek, Great Bend, KS

*Curved Impressions*, watercolor, 34 x 28 inches.

"Nature's beauty, power, uniqueness, and danger have always intrigued me. For the past twenty years, my work has been concerned with showing my feelings about those forces. Recent paintings have focused on paintings of Japanese Koi, water and reflections, lily pads, and landscapes with crows hidden among the foliage. With every new painting I attempt, I realize I've just begun to explore the possibilities these subjects offer.

I love the drama I can find in nature it constantly changes. Even though my works are realistic, I can always find tremendous leeway to express myself. By emphasizing the rhythmic patterns, the sparking colors, or the dynamic forms I can show how I feel about this challenging subject.

When I am exploring a subject I look for the most exciting arrangement of forms, color and light and try to arrive at the most dramatic possible way of presenting what I see to the viewer. My finished paintings have little resemblance to the original scene. This is a natural part of the process because I'm not striving for an exact copy of reality. I'm using reality as a starting point to let me express myself. To this end my paintings are colorful, expressive and dynamic. New realities and images are sometimes created."

Noah Flores, Marquette, KS

*Platonic Elision*,  
2014, oil on canvas,  
24 x 28 inches.



"Growing up in central Kansas has given me a unique perspective. Therefore, the landscape has become a major influence and inspiration in my painting. The wide open spaces and brilliant wide skies have become central in my landscape work. Recently, I have been working on several different themes and ideas. Of those themes, one I have been concentrating on is landscape painting. One reason I paint landscapes is an attempt to capture the place and moment. Trying to capture light and certain types of light is also very important in my landscape painting. To me almost everything in painting deals with the light. Another aspect to my landscapes is the idea of escapism and transportation. In my opinion a characteristic of a good landscape painting is one that takes you to that place. It feels like you are there and are able to walk into the environment. I usually take photos that strike me with inspiration and create dramatic feelings that I take back to my studio. I often infuse them with my own feeling and style that create narratives or states of being.

I recently have been working on nocturnes as well. These scenes at night are a real challenge to paint and are unique. I liked the subdued palette and the low light that runs across these canvases. It is hard to get small changes in color and achieve vibrant light. There is also a physiological impact to these paintings. There is a certain fear and uncertainty in the low light of night. There is also a sense of quietness, peacefulness, even romanticism. I attempt to bring the eye into the night and expose it. Despite the lack of light; there is still light."



Maleta Forsberg, Lindsborg, KS

*Summertime*, watercolor, 20 x 16 inches.

Artist Maleta Forsberg has earned a reputation for watercolors, oils and acrylics of rural landscapes, animals, and architecture in the Midwest. She has completed major liturgical commissions, as well as paintings and designs that celebrate Swedish heritage. Some of her pieces are inspired by her extensive travel, especially in Europe.

Forsberg's work has been selected for and honored in juried regional and national competitions, including Watercolor USA and National Wildlife Exhibitions, and in invitational, group, and solo shows across the Plains.

Her work is part of public, private, and corporate collections in the US and abroad. She is a past president of the Artists' Guild of Wichita, the Sandzén Memorial Foundation Board, and the Kansas Watercolor Society, as well as a member of the Kansas Academy of Oil Painters.

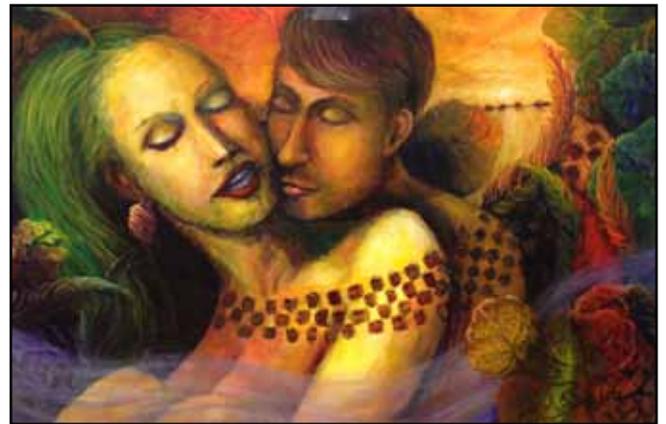
Rick Frisbie, Salina, KS

*Two Suns*, 2014, oil painting, 24 x 36 inches.

*Two Suns* is Salina artist Rick Frisbie's fantasy on the theme, "Embracing Nature."

Frisbie writes, "Embracing for warmth and comfort is a primal, human response. Connection... touch... is essential and sought whatever one's financial or physical condition. The couple's sunlit form reflects the fulfillment of that need.

The distant sun speaks of the revolving embrace of the larger nature. And so in this idyllic image the human forms are embracing even as they are embraced."



Andrea Fuhrman, Abilene, KS

*Growth*,  
2014, acrylic on Masonite,  
8 x 8 inches.

"Miraculously, my painting is about spontaneity, gesture and painting with great abandon and yet careful editing: I threw it all down, and then didn't want to mess it up. So here it is. A moment in the "now" the present moment, which is what a painting does – demarcate who you are at this moment while the brush is in hand, the music pouring like the paint that is scribbled onto Masonite. Since I do not draw like Leonardo DaVinci, I have simplified and used the pod shape as the initial image to then explore materials and process. The pod, the circle, the ovum, repeat over and over, as a reflection of my interest in microbiology; i.e. what is happening on the glass slide as one watches thru the microscope lens. There is life, motion, or the frozen moment of kinetic energy. That view is intimate, small and something one could hold. Viewing life through the microscope is fragile, spectacular, infinitesimal. For once, the paint and the pencil and the mix of colors are enough. Now."

Don Fullmer, Hutchinson, KS

*Winds of Change*, 2010, mixed media, 26 x 35 inches.



"I think of my work as Intuitive Painting. Through manipulation of paint, such as floating oil paint on water, or by arranging cut-out shapes of painted material, ideas begin to take form. Building on these ideas leads to the gradual development of a completed painting.

There is much discussion these days about Earth changes. Whether it be earthquakes, tsunamis, temperature extremes, even celestial events like comets and meteors, Nature is in the news.

*Winds of Change* seems to have evolved from my interest in these ongoing events of Nature that are happening on and around our planet today."



Hugh Greer, Wichita, KS

*Soaring over the Prairie*, 2013, acrylic on board, 20 x 30 inches.

"If you have taken the time to read this, congratulations! I didn't think anyone ever reads 'artists statements!'

You can tell a lot about an artist's personality when you look at his or her work. I paint what appeals to me, and that happens to be the landscape, in a fairly realistic style. I also approach each painting with the intention of making it a better painting than the one I've just finished! I began using acrylic paint in the 1960's. Today I use fluid acrylic

paint which allows me to paint in layers of thin washes as the paint is quite transparent. I use a limited palette of five colors. From these five colors I can mix any color I need. By mixing my own colors from these five, I get a more vibrant and harmonious result.

I painted *Soaring over the Prairie* after cruising the Flint Hills with a giant sized bag of peanut M&M's at my side (one of my favorite things to). The Flint Hills intrigue me with their rolling grace. The hawks were soaring overhead that day and it was a spectacular sight!"

Lisa Grossman, Lawrence, KS

*Unfurling*,  
2013, oil on canvas,  
12 x 46 inches.



"As a painter and print-maker for the past two decades, my work's central theme has been

open space. I've found my inspiration in the wide skies and prairies of Eastern Kansas and the Kansas River Valley. The power of this place, and my emotional responses to weather and shifts in light, color, and seasons, are the true subjects of my work.

For my *plein air* work, I tend to go out around sundown and paint into dark. I often finish smaller pieces in the field and larger work goes back to the studio for finishing and simplifying from memory.

My work has always been about shifts and ephemerality. I'm not so much trying to freeze moments in time as much as I am attempting to convey my first-hand experiences of the way it felt to be there, than how it looked. My wish is to share some of what I've discovered, offering a new way a seeing open prairie spaces that awakens a new appreciation for them."



John Hachmeister, Lawrence, KS

*Big Little Girl Looks for the Way*,  
2014, porcelain,  
22 x 19 x 6 inches.

"I lived and created porcelain sculpture in Jingdezhen, China the last two springs. Working there reminded me how all cultures revere nature while losing connections with the natural world. I lived in a residency a few miles from the city and in an area where porcelain artwork has been created for 5,000 years. The forest outside my studio was dotted with gravesites and littered with pottery shards—some quite ancient. However, all was covered with vegetation and alive with insects and frogs.

Despite centuries of human use and miss-use, nature kept creeping back. Bamboo pushed through paths and roadsides and tiny fish swam in streams used for washing both clothes and the food gathered in the forests. I saw people throw both trash and (with great ceremony) loved one's ashes into the river the streams fed.

This is what we do in America, too, though we are not so open about it.

We embrace nature while all too often taking it for granted.

The sculpture I chose for this exhibition is layered in ancient and modern mythology, but shows cracks through those facades. Cracks that reveal another, more fundamental world where all materials for art, and the creative spark for it too, originate. That world is the natural one, the one we must all embrace."

Ross Hilgers, Moorhead, MN

*Untitled #17*,  
earthenware,  
12 x 11 x 11 inches.

Ross Hilgers teaches at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. He is a graduate of Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. About his artwork he writes: "I often produce work with a focus on mass, form, and the flow of time. The beauty of basic forms coming together to form a sculpture intrigues me. I create my pieces without openings to generate ambiguity about whether the sculpture is solid or hollow and to eliminate connections to function. My work is unglazed to remove reference to many historical connotations that glaze implies. In place of glaze, I use non-conventional metal coatings to create surfaces that convey age or history, emphasizing the surface's organic signs of decay while intimately mingling with the strength of the underlying form. This finishing process captures the passage of time on the elemental structure of the sculpture. By working with metal coatings and by working outside the canons of representation, function, and vessel, I strive for viewers to understand clay purely, as a material for abstract sculpture and as a material that relates to its surroundings."



Ann Horton, Wichita, KS

*Gifts from the Sea*, 2005, watercolor, 30 x 43 inches.

"The sea is a vast vision of beauty to the eye and a great source of food to feed the people of the world. This painting is from Vera Cruz, Mexico, in the late 80's, depicting the fishermen at work.

Painting is like being given a magic wand to share your dreams and visions with others and they enjoy what you create."



George Jerkovich, Salina, KS

*Niles Road, Saline County, Kansas*, photo print on canvas, 35 x 55 inches.

"Over the last three decades I have devoted much time to learning and practicing the art of photography. My subject tends to be local landscape. I concentrate on the local landscape, because it is familiar. I am not distracted by novelty and can concentrate on the subject and composition. My goal is to craft high quality, beautiful images. I can say no more. Thinking about art gives me a headache."

Joyce Jilg, Hays, KS

*Radio Head*,  
2014, radio parts and found objects, chain length 18 inches.

*Lost in the Current*,  
2014, found conduit and glass beads, chain length 18 inches.

*I'm Not Exhausted Anymore*,  
2014, found exhaust pipe and other pieces, chain length 21 inches.



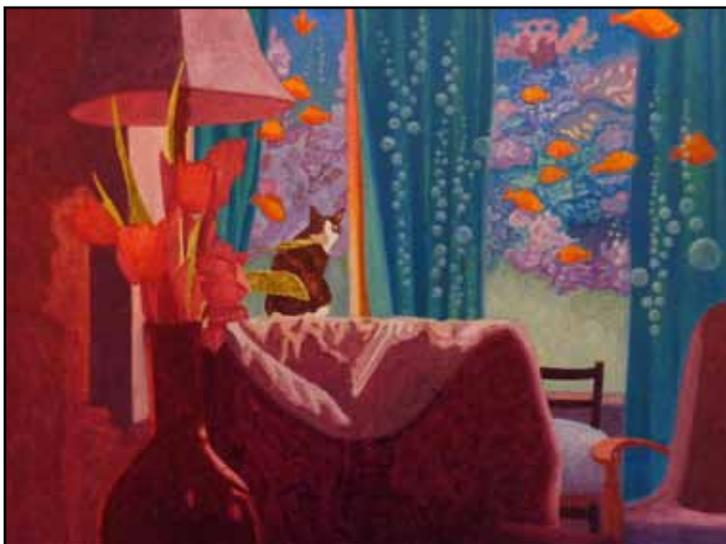
"I create jewelry from discarded objects found on the streets and roads around home and the world. My style fills my deep commitment to reduce, reuse, and recycle. While out walking or riding my bike, I find objects that are worn, bent, crushed, rusted, and corroded that have been created by the forces of nature, sometimes with the help of man. They possess a design that has pathetic beauty. I enjoy adornment and the unique challenge of making something interesting and unique out of those objects."

Michael Jilg, Hays, KS

*Double Iris,*  
2014, oil on canvas,  
46 x 46 inches.

"For years, my art has been evidence of my imagination, resulting from controlled accidental beginnings such as pouring paint on canvas. Through the use of design, color, texture and value adjustments these beginnings developed into finished non-objective paintings. The joy of this type of work is in the process of discovering something that no one has seen before. I find this exciting and plan to continue this type of research. However, I have recently diverted my aesthetic attention to the production of a series of large naturalistic flower paintings. These are a reminder to myself, and the viewer of the fragility of beauty and brevity of life.

The painting "Double Iris" is a portrait of a flower from Joyce Jilg's garden. I have always admired the result of her labor and have started to paint special examples. I am representing these images in a large scale as a reminder of what we have to lose as we race toward environmental catastrophe."



Sally Johnson, Bolivar, MO

*Fish Encounter,*  
2014, acrylic,  
18 x 24 inches.

"I am basically a colorist. Reality often inspires my work, which is carefully composed, placing my work in the field of magical realism. Each painting involves the stillness of isolated moments that take place in the mind. Some pieces are based on actual locations, some are composites of different places, while others are completely imaginary. My work involves the function of memory, imagination and intuition."



Ken Klostermeyer, Salina, KS

*Evolution*,  
1975, stoneware,  
26 x 11 x 11 inches.

"I was introduced to pottery through an adult education class at Bethany College in 1970. I subsequently received a studio art degree from Bethany, but pottery is my media of choice. Wheel-thrown, high-fired functional stoneware or porcelain incorporating a variety of decorating techniques - carving, incising, and application of oxides and glazes - constitute the majority of my work. Many of the designs are drawn from nature.

Teaching pottery to other adults through Marymount College, Kansas Wesleyan University, the Salina YWCA, Imagination Place Community Art Center and Salina Parks and Recreation Commission, has provided a rewarding opportunity to share my passion for the medium through the years.

This vase was one of my early works, created while I was at Marymount College. It incorporates images of birds, turtles and fish, themes which reoccur in many of my subsequent works."

Kathleen Kuchar, Hays, KS

*On the Fly*,  
2001, watercolor monotype and acrylic,  
12 x 9 inches.

"It is easy for me to EMBRACE NATURE since I grew up on a Nebraska farm. I loved helping my dad tend the livestock and work the fields. Almost everything I create has to do with a memory or a dream or a subconscious unraveling of something from my childhood, my travels, or from the process itself.

*On the Fly* is a whimsical watercolor monotype altered with a little acrylic. It is one of those "landscapes of the mind" that I like so well. While working on a painting, I sometimes see shapes evolve into lively creatures and living forms. I merely bring them into focus. I like the statement made by artist, Paul Klee, when he said 'I make the invisible, visible.' I also love the work of Charles Burchfield, an artist who created landscapes that seem to be 'alive' --trees bend, wind howls, birds sing, sunflowers speak."



Elizabeth Liljegren, Lindsborg, KS

*Lament of the Deep*,  
2014, gouache,  
28 x 21 inches.

Elizabeth Liljegren is a Lindsborg/McPherson area artist whose career in the arts included 36 years as an art educator while she continued to work as an artist focusing primarily on painting. Her current work, in the watercolor media of gouache, focuses on her concern for environmental issues. The brightly colored imagery in her paintings explores the complex relationship between human beings and the planet.

The artist writes, "*Lament of the Deep* though it may be colorful and appear pleasing to the eye, refers to the ecological damage of the oceans as a result of industrial pollution, off-shore drilling, dumping of waste, overfishing, etc. The fish images are representative of species consumed by humans such as Blue Fin Tuna, California Sardines and Mackerel. Some species contain toxic elements such as mercury, others are overfished or endangered. My question is: Are we embracing nature or are we on a path toward destruction of nature?"

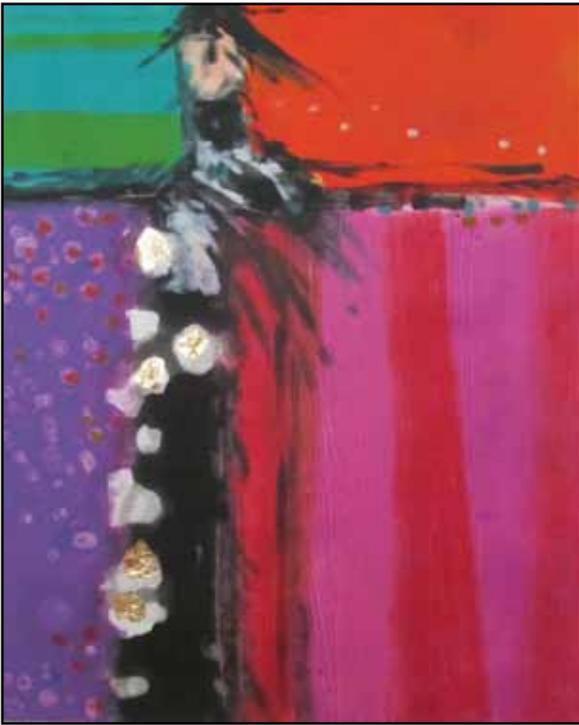


Ron Michael, Lindsborg, KS

*Oval Stone*,  
2014, limestone and wood,  
21 x 28 x 18 inches.

Ron Michael makes sculpture, vessels, and disks that are inspired by the landscape, soil, and geology of Kansas. Although most are invented forms or images, they reference organisms, objects, and remnants that coexist in this subtle and alluring ecosystem. When creating pieces, Michael tries to infuse them with a sublime quality and sense of mystery that one might feel when visiting a natural history museum. Additionally he embraces a weathered aesthetic, directness, simplicity, imperfection, texture, asymmetry, and a touch of humor.

Whenever prudent, Michael uses local or reclaimed materials and non-mechanized processes. For his sculptural forms he uses locally found limestone and regional or reclaimed wood.



Phyllis Liljegren Newson, Lindsborg, KS

*Harvest Maiden: Festival Dress*,  
monoprint: oil on paper / chine-collé, 22 x 30 inches.

Watercolorist Phyllis Liljegren Newson received a B.F.A. from Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, an M.F.A. from the University of Northern Colorado and has completed additional graduate study in art from the University of Kansas, Adams State College (CO) and Emporia State University. Newson is a signature member of the National Watercolor Society, and her work has received recognition and awards in national and regional juried shows. Her paintings have been presented in numerous solo and group shows, and have been published in WATERCOLOR magazine. Works are also represented in public and private collections in Sweden, Canada, England and the United States - including the collection of Emprise Financial Corp. in Wichita.

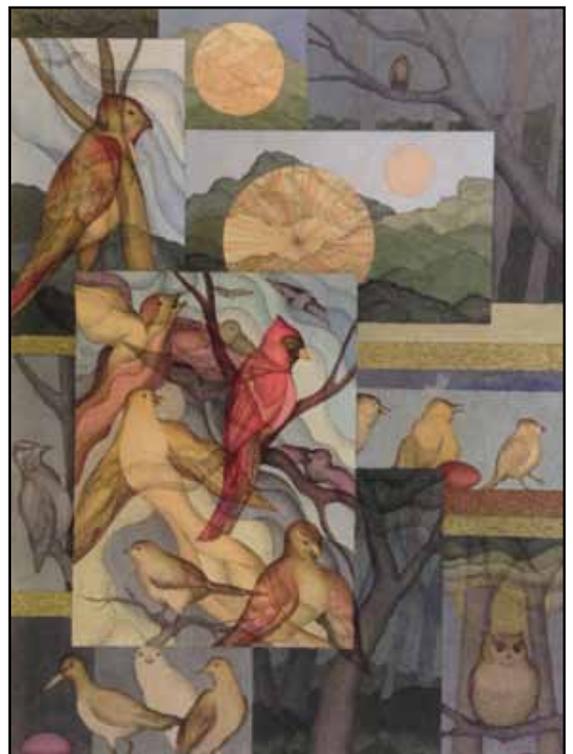
Newson states, "I've visited and painted in Taos/Santa Fe often and have come to realize and understand how much this area and it's strong influences have impacted all of my work. Color, design, texture and drama are each very much a part of my painting style, regardless of subject or media. The strongest of these, for me, is COLOR ..... and I found it in New Mexico! The first time I saw this 'Land of Enchantment' ..... I WAS 'HOOKED'!"

Frank Nichols, Hays, KS

*The Disputation of the Egg*,  
acrylic and ink, 24 x 18 inches.

Sadly, Frank Nichols passed away during the development of this exhibition. The Sandzén Gallery is extremely grateful that his wife, Karen, has encouraged the inclusion of *The Disputation of the Egg*. In a statement prepared prior to his death, Nichols wrote, "I work with images from my imagination and allow my pictures to develop with little preconceived planning. I prefer to work with content that is accessible to any intelligent person and generally avoid expression intended only for those with an academic degree in art. I am most happy when my work is enjoyed by a broad audience.

Although I was a professor at Fort Hays State University until I retired in 1999, as an artist I have always considered myself to be an amateur in the classical sense of the term. I do the work simply to be an element of existence in the universe. Promotion, selling and exhibiting presentation are things beyond my basic competence. This is, of course, a disadvantage. But, it is honestly the case that my rewards are in the process, in the time absorbed in the doing. I hope that some of this may be enjoyed by the viewer."

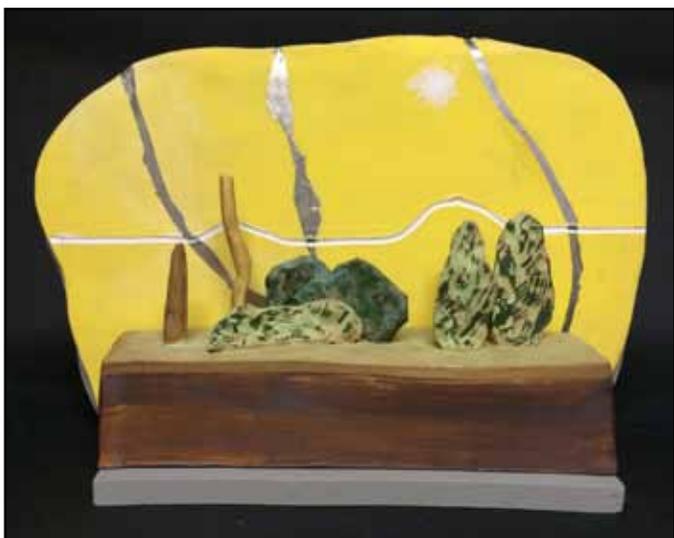


Barbara Waterman Peters, Topeka, KS

*Dark Fish VI*,  
2014, oil on canvas,  
20 x 20 inches.

"My major work has involved the human figure for the last number of years, primarily the female in my "women" series. Recently, I have begun a "men" series as well.

"While these concerns are endlessly fascinating, occasionally I veer off to other subjects in the natural world. This exhibition with its "nature" theme has provided an opportunity to further explore the microcosms of ponds and their inhabitants."



Larry Peters, Topeka, KS

*Heat of Day*,  
2014, stoneware with wood base  
and underglaze colors,  
12 x 17 x 6 inches.

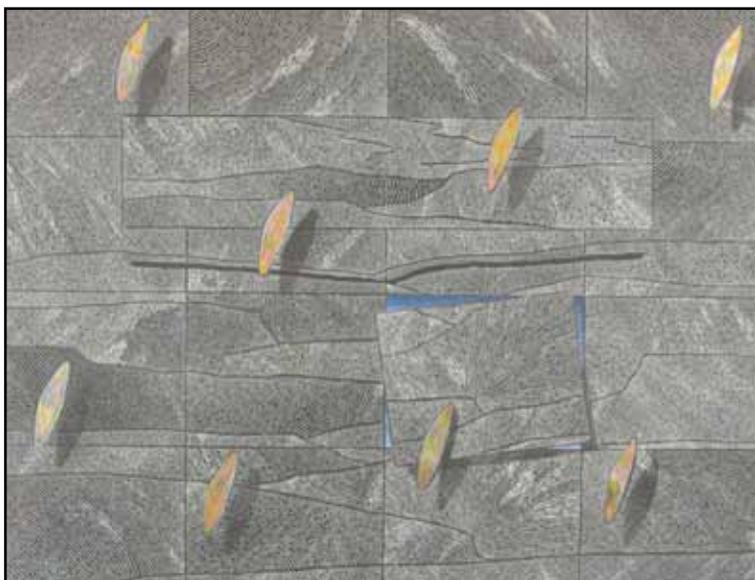
"My major work is two-dimensional and abstract; its subject is the Holocaust.

Seldom have I done work using nature or landscape. This piece is abstracted from what a formal garden might be like on an imaginary hot day."

Leland Powers, Hays, KS

*Crossing*,  
2011, ink and colored pencil,  
30 x 38 inches.

"As a native of the short grass country of Western Kansas, I have always been moved by the large sky and low horizon of the plains. Having spent countless hours trekking about the pastures and prairie land of my home county, I absorbed into my very being the spatial sensibilities of distant vistas and vacant, subtle vignettes. The linear definition and worked surface in my images celebrates the nuances and fleeting visual memories of that world."





Jim Richardson, Lindsborg, KS

*Cruising the Wild Alfalfa*,  
taken in 2006, published in 2007,  
photograph, 16 x 24 inches.

For more than 30 years, photographer Jim Richardson has photographed the natural world for *National Geographic Magazine* and *National Geographic TRAVELER*. His subjects have included Tanzania's teeming migrations, Antarctica's penguin colonies, Scotland's island seascapes, and Washington state's volcanic mountains. Richardson pursues what he calls "working images." These photographs report

as well as seek beauty, offering layers of meaning and information in the service of telling complex stories about issues and locations. One of the most amazing sights Richardson has witnessed is the rising of a massive group of male fireflies on the Kansas tallgrass prairie. "Prairie courtship lit up the twilight that evening," said Richardson. "None too different, I suppose, than teenagers cruising main street in Kansas small towns. Just one of those summer rituals. Even having grown up in Kansas, I had never seen anything like it."

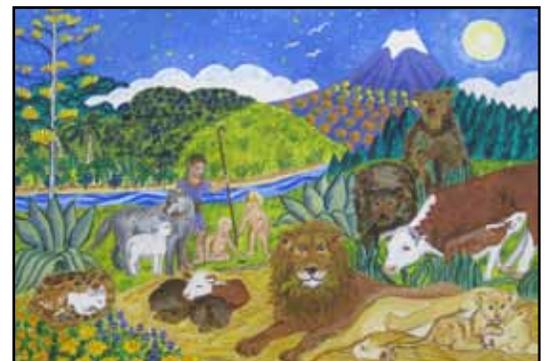
Rose Marie Wallen, Lindsborg, KS

*What's for Dinner?*,  
2014, woodcut and transfer print (fern leaves and finger-tip  
apples),  
13 x 9 inches.

*The Peaceable Kingdom*,  
1999, acrylic painting on paper,  
8 x 11 inches.

"The "Embracing Nature" theme brings to mind the acknowledgment of our natural state. Adam and Eve in the Garden was a theme that intrigued our daughter Anne as a small child. I have used one of her early drawings as a basis for a woodcut / transfer print. I love the naïve artistic style that comes naturally to children: it makes me smile.

My painting, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, depicting the prophesy in Isaiah 11:1-10 is done in children's book illustration style. I show not only the animals described living peacefully together, but also children of different races. The earth's biomes transition in the background, and the century plant (*Agave Americana*) blooms in the desert on the left. This symbolizes the beginning of a new era of harmony among all creatures, and mankind caring for nature responsibly. In the eastern sky are seen the constellations of Gemini, Orion, Taurus, Aries, and the full moon rising. The peaceful heavens watch over the peaceful Earth."



Kurt Wolf, Salina, KS

*Wall Shield*,  
2013, mixed media,  
24 x 23 inches.

"I am always fascinated by the patinas, textures, lines, and shapes that are left to mature through old discarded wood and metal items. They have a life, an energy that takes on a different meaning when interpreted outside their normal scope of existence. I search for a flow, a balance in their form. Objects and materials are repurposed into designs that suggest symmetry, colors are subtle, and a new sculpture is born from old artifacts and disposed scraps. Titles are neither profound nor enlightening; they are mainly straight forward and matter of fact. I get my satisfaction from overhearing people talk about what they discover within the materials that were used to make these sculptures. They bring back a memory."



Ann Zerger, Moundridge, KS

*Flight*,  
2014, carved limestone, metal and wood,  
44 x 48 x 36 inches.

"Raised as a Mennonite farmer's daughter I developed a kinship with the earth, nature, and the simplicities of living a life centered on peace and social justice. The back drop of the vast Kansas landscape and changing skies gave me the chance to develop my own sense of imagination within the Mennonite structure of plainness, practicality and simplicity. Visual art in itself was not highly encouraged by Mennonites but functional art was expressed through canning, quilts, gardens and planted fields displaying a vast variety of geometric shapes and color. Within this context I learned a natural sense of order, balance and harmony that I apply to my life and art.

Horses have been a part of my daily life since I was a small child. I was taught not only how to ride and train horses but more important the language of the horse. Learning this language taught me that the horse is a very complicated animal whose personalities and relationships parallel those of humans. To me they represent freedom, grace, power and a connection to the wildness and unpredictability of the untamed natural world. In my work they act as a metaphor for pure, raw human emotions."

## Artists exhibiting in "Embracing Nature"

Lee Becker, Lindsborg, KS	Michael Jilg, Hays, KS
Wayne A. Conyers, McPherson, KS	Sally Johnson, Bolivar, MO
Jean Cook, Paola, KS	Ken Klostermeyer, Salina, KS
Steve Dudek, Great Bend, KS	Kathleen Kuchar, Hays, KS
Noah Flores, Marquette, KS	Elizabeth Liljegren, Lindsborg, KS
Maleta Forsberg, Lindsborg, KS	Ron Michael, Lindsborg, KS
Rick Frisbie, Salina, KS	Phyllis Liljegren Newson, Lindsborg, KS
Andrea Fuhrman, Abilene, KS	Frank Nichols, Hays, KS
Don Fullmer, Hutchinson, KS	Barbara Waterman Peters, Topeka, KS
Hugh Greer, Wichita, KS	Larry Peters, Topeka, KS
Lisa Grossman, Lawrence, KS	Leland Powers, Hays, KS
John Hachmeister, Lawrence, KS	Jim Richardson, Lindsborg, KS
Ross Hilgers, Moorhead, MN	Rose Marie Wallen, Lindsborg, KS
Ann Horton, Wichita, KS	Kurt Wolf, Salina, KS
George Jerkovich, Salina, KS	Ann Zerger, Moundridge, KS
Joyce Jilg, Hays, KS	

### **Birger Sandzen Memorial Gallery Staff:**

Ron Michael, Director  
Cori Sherman North, Curator  
Mary Swenson, Development Director  
Muriel Gentine, Secretary

## **The Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery**

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**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m., Sunday  
Closed Mondays and major holidays